



THE COUNTY OF CHESTER



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November is the Time to Talk Turkey

West Chester, Pa. –With the holidays nearly upon us, farmers throughout the region are busier than ever fielding orders for locally grown ingredients to be featured in everything from the main course to dessert. Rest assured, there is still time to order a fresh, local turkey for your Thanksgiving meal if you haven't done so already.

Will Smith, operator at Deep Roots Valley Farm in Mohrsville, sells turkeys at the Phoenixville Farmers' Market as well as on the farm, encourages shoppers not to wait too much longer. Smith notes, "We don't have an order cut-off date, but we will be taking orders until we are sold out, which we nearly are."

Not only will buying a locally raised turkey keep more of your dollar in your community by supporting a local business, but it also means getting a fresh bird, not one that's been sitting in a freezer for months. Making the choice to support our local farmers is a great way to show how thankful we are for all the hard work they do all year long.

According to Chester County farmer Matt Ventrella, managing member of Wynnorr Farm: "People come back year after year to buy our birds because Thanksgiving is special and they want that special connection or experience that only coming out to the farm can deliver. It has become part of their family tradition, and for that we are honored."

For consumers who have been hearing about avian flu in the news and might be wondering what, if any, impact it might cause this holiday season, it appears the issue is primarily an economic one for poultry producers. Dr. Gregory Martin from Penn State Extension's Poultry Team says, "All poultry species in all growing environments could be possibly susceptible to avian flu. However, we practice good biosecurity on poultry farms to help ward off these kinds of issues." He also confirms that avian flu has yet to be discovered in the state.

Here in southeastern Pennsylvania, our local turkey farmers are already taking proactive measures to ensure good flock health. "We take our birds' health and welfare very seriously," says Smith. "By constantly monitoring our flocks' health, not sharing equipment with other farms, sourcing our poultry from certified hatcheries, and keeping our birds out of high risk areas such as waterways where wild fowl may congregate, we are doing our part to prevent the spread of avian flu."

Ventrella shares Smith's upbeat outlook, "As we approach the Thanksgiving holiday, all Americans should stop and remember that we live in the greatest country with the safest and most abundant food supply. The most important thing for consumers to remember is that properly handled and fully cooked poultry is safe to eat."

For information on where to order locally raised turkeys, visit www.chesco.org/agdev/farmguide.

Want to know more about avian flu? Visit <http://extension.psu.edu/animals/poultry/topics/health-and-diseases/avian-influenza>.

About the Chester County Agricultural Development Council

The Chester County Agricultural Development Council promotes agriculture in Chester County by raising awareness on issues regarding the viability of local agriculture and promoting agricultural excellence and farming. For more information, visit us at www.chesco.org/agdev, [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages.

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